

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-39 are pending. Reconsideration of the application based on the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-39 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Lof (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0160582) in view of Hall (U.S. Patent No. 6,581,438). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

One of ordinary skill in the art would not have modified Lof in view of Hall to obtain the combinations of features recited in independent claims 1, 16, 23, 31 and 39. Lof discloses a lithographic apparatus and device manufacturing method, while Hall discloses a capillary test specimen method and system for visualizing and quantifying capillary flows of liquid under realistic conditions, including polymer under fillings, injection molding, soldering, braising and casting. Hall is directed at polymer under filling, injection molding, soldering, braising and casting where high temperatures are used and liquid solidifies quickly and stays permanent.

In rejecting Applicants' claims, the Office Action relies on Hall's Fig. 1B, which depicts a braised joint, where surfaces are oriented at an angle less than 90° to each other, which are common joints made during braising and soldering operations. See Hall col. 3, lines 30-35; col. 7, lines 12-15; and Fig. 1B. One of ordinary skill in the art would not have modified the lithographic apparatus of Lof in view of the capillary test specimen, method and system of Hall (where the liquid solidifies instantaneously) to obtain the substrate holding device/method/plate recited in Applicants' independent claims. The problems addressed by Hall's chamfered surface do not exist in the Lof system, and thus one of ordinary skill in the art would not have considered it to have been obvious to modify Lof in view of Hall in the manner proposed by the Office Action. There is no viable reason to modify Lof in view of

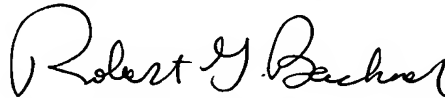
Hall in the manner proposed by the Office Action. Thus, the Office Action relies on impermissible hindsight.

Thus, claims 1, 16, 23, 31 and 39 are patentable. Accordingly, claims 2-15, 17-22, 24-30 and 32-38 are patentable by their dependence on claims 1, 16, 23 and 31 for at least the reasons explained above regarding claims 1, 16, 23 and 31. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment:

Petition for Extension of Time

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